

Application No.: 10/748,494Case No.: 59375US002Remarks

Claims 1-13 are pending. Claims 1, 2, and 4 have been amended. Claim 13 has been added.

We gratefully acknowledge the Examiners indication that claims 2, 3, and 7-9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

§ 102 Rejections

The Examiner, however, has rejected claims 1 and 10-12 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Svendsen.

We have amended claim 1 for greater precision in distinguishing the structure of the spray gun claimed in claim 1 from the structure of the spray gun described by Svendsen.

While the spray gun described by Svendsen includes many structural features also included in the spray gun claimed in claim 1, there is at least one significant structural difference that patentably distinguishes the spray gun according to the present invention from the spray gun described in Svendsen. In the spray gun according to the present invention the body assembly has a connector portion at the inlet end of the liquid passageway adapted to be connected to a connector portion on a liquid container positioned above the body assembly. In contrast, in the spray gun described in Svendsen the liquid passageway extends through what the Examiner has called the nozzle portion 22 and through the portion the Examiner has called the platform portion 10. This difference is very important, as it means that after use of the spray gun according to the present invention its body portion can be separated from its platform portion and a new clean body portion attached to its platform portion without the need to clean the liquid passageway. This is a significant convenience to users of the spray gun according to the present invention when, for example, they want to spray a different color of paint. Such easy change of the spray gun to spray paints of different colors is not possible with the spray gun of Svendsen in which the liquid passageway in the "platform portion 10" would have to be cleaned before a different color of paint could be sprayed from the spray gun.

Thus, claim 1 is not anticipated by Svendsen, and should be allowed.

Application No.: 10/748,494Case No.: 59375US002

Claims 10, 11, and 12 are dependent on claim 1 and thus should be allowed for the reasons given above for the allowance of claim 1. Also, these claims recite further structural limitations that are not shown by the cited prior art in the claimed combination. For example, claim 10 recites that the body assembly includes an air cap portion having horns, and means mounting the air cap portion on the nozzle portion, the molded air cap and nozzle portions having surfaces forming the first and second air passageways, the means mounting the air cap portion on the nozzle portion allowing rotation of the air cap portion about the axis relative to the nozzle portion, the air cap and nozzle portions include stops limiting relative rotation of the air cap and nozzle portions to rotation through a predetermined angle between first and second relative positions, and the means mounting the air cap portion on the nozzle portion includes surfaces in frictional engagement to restrict relative rotation of the air cap and nozzle portions until a predetermined torque is applied between the air cap and nozzle portions.

§ 103 Rejections

The Examiner has rejected claim 5 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Svendsen in view of Hartle; and has rejected claim 6 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Svendsen.

The spray gun according to the present invention is patentably distinguishable from the spray gun described in Svendsen for the reasons given above with respect to claim 1. Claims 5 and 6 are dependent on claim 1 and thus should be allowed for the reasons given above for the allowance of claim 1. Also, these claims recite further structural limitations that are not shown by the cited prior art in the claimed combination. For example, claim 5 recites that the nozzle portion is molded of polymeric material, and the body assembly includes an air cap portion molded of polymeric material having the horns, and means mounting the air cap portion on the nozzle portion, the molded air cap and nozzle portions having surfaces forming the first and second air passageways. While polymeric portions for air guns are known, they are particularly useful for the body assembly in the spray gun according to the present invention to make them inexpensive so that a user can afford to use many body assemblies with one platform portion to facilitate spraying paint of different colors. Claim 6 recites that the outlet passageways and

Application No.: 10/748,494Case No.: 59375US002

apertures in said horns are non-circular which facilitates shaping the air stream and thereby the shape of the stream of liquid being sprayed.

Reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims in this application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

November 4, 2005

Date

By: W. L. Huebsch

William L. Huebsch, Reg. No.: 25,990

Telephone No.: 651-733-2835

Office of Intellectual Property Counsel
3M Innovative Properties Company
Facsimile No.: 651-736-3833